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Department of Health, Education, and Welfare - Public Health Service

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE NEWS

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CONTRACT SIGNED WITH ARCHITECTS

In May the General Services Administration selected the architectural firm of R. B. O'Connor and W. H. Kilham, Jr. as architects for a new building for the National Library of Medicine. Under a preliminary contract the architects made a study of space requirements and an estimate of cost. This study was accepted by the National Library of Medicine, the Public Health Service, and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as a workable statement of space requirements. In a request to the Bureau of the Budget for the apportionment of the remaining planning funds appropriated by Congress last summer, the document was used as a basis for discussion. The Bureau of the Budget thereupon made available sufficient funds to permit the negotiation of a contract with the architects for full architectural services.

Under the terms of the contract, signed the last week in June, the architects will design the building, prepare working drawings and specifications and a more detailed estimate of probable cost, and will provide architectural and engineering supervision after construction begins. The tentative schedule contemplates the presentation of schematic sketches for an overall design by early fall, 1957.

MEETING OF BOARD OF REGENTS

The third meeting of the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine was held in Washington on the afternoon of June 7. Members present were Dr. Daniels, Dr. Spector, Miss Marshall, General Hays, Dr. Curran, Dr. Lyons, Dr. DeBakey, Dr. Bibby, Dr. Burney, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Middleton, Dr. Mumford. Guests present were Mr. R. B. O'Connor and Mr. W. H. Kilham, Jr., architects; Mr. Keyes D. Metcalf, NLM building consultant; Mr. C. J. Biegalski, Public Buildings Service; Dr. W. Palmer Dearing, Public Health Service; Mr. Rufus E. Miles, Jr., Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; and Mr. R. W. Severance and Lt. Colonel F. B. Rogers of the NLM staff.

The Board discussed a revision in the policy for distribution of Library publications which would adjust distribution patterns to federal government agencies in such a manner that all agencies would receive NLM publications on an equable basis, within existing financial and regulatory limitations. The policy was approved without dissent.

The Director reported on various developments in regard to the new building culminating in a meeting, on the morning of June 7 at the Bureau of the Budget, attended by representatives of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, National Library of Medicine, and Public Buildings Service. (Subsequently, on June 19, the Bureau of the Budget granted apportionment of the remaining planning funds for the Library.)

The architects presented general considerations for planning the building, including siting.

The date for the next meeting of the Board of Regents was set for September 23, 1957.

JAPANESE SERIALS

The National Library of Medicine has a large collection of Japanese medical serials, containing about 375 currently received titles and an undetermined number of dead titles. This collection is, unfortunately, not in good condition because only a few titles are properly cataloged, and two systems of transliteration have been employed. The Library is now standardized on the Hepburn system of romanization, and is trying in other ways to put the collection in sound bibliographical order.

The strength of this collection was recently tested when it was checked against the titles listed in an article to be published in the Bulletin of the Medical Library Association entitled "The Past and Present of Japanese Medical Journals. Part II. Medical Journals in Japan, 1890 and 1956" by Shunji Onodera, Librarian of the Tohoku University Medical Library. Of the 131 current substantive journals mentioned, NLM had 118 titles, lacked ten, and three titles were out of scope. The Library purchases 28 of its 118 titles and receives 25 as gifts and 65 on exchange.

The Japanese collection is used by a wide variety of Library patrons scattered from coast to coast. Interlibrary loan requests come from individuals, pharmaceutical firms, medical centers, research institutions, and various branches of the federal government.

NLM PREPARES FOR INCEPTION OF NEW LOAN POLICY

The Library's new loan policy, described in the June issue of the NEWS, will go into effect on September 1, and the Library has been heavily engaged in preparing for the changeover. The steps through which requests will go, from the time they are received in the Library to the moment the books or photocopies, or the reports on them, are sent to the requesting library, have been charted. A new loan form has been designed and a few form letters have been planned to take care of anticipated recurring questions; a new camera for speeding up copying service has been installed.

Briefly, the National Library of Medicine will loan material only to other libraries rather than to individuals; it will provide photocopies rather than the original whenever feasible, and postage costs to the borrowing library will be paid.

Leaflets on the new policy are available on request.

HARVEY TERCENTENARY

In commemoration of the 300th anniversary of the death of William Harvey, the National Library of Medicine and the National Heart Institute are sponsoring a one-day symposium on the circulation of the blood at the NIH Clinical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, on September 17, 1957. The morning session will be given over to a historical perspective of the discovery of the circulation of the blood, including a film re-enacting the experimental work of Harvey. The afternoon session will be devoted to modern work on problems in circulation.

A committee representing the National Heart Institute, the National Library of Medicine, and the Visual Aids Branch of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is planning an exhibit on Harvey for this symposium. The exhibit will be divided into three sections: Precursors of Harvey; Harvey and his Times; and Later Works on Circulation. A descriptive catalog of the exhibit is in preparation. Coöperating with the exhibit committee are the Library of Congress, Folger Shakespeare Library, the Medical Museum of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, and the Smithsonian Institution. The Instituto de Cardiologia of the University of Mexico is furnishing a copy, in color, of a mural by Diego Rivera.

After being shown at the National Institutes of Health in September, the exhibit will be shown at the National Library of Medicine; certain portions will then be on display at the Smithsonian Institution and in the Medical Museum.

AMERICANA CHECK-LIST

Mr. Robert B. Austin, Assistant Chief of the Reference Division, recently visited the Boston Medical Library, the Library of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, and the John Carter Brown Library in Providence; this trip was undertaken in connection with the check-list of medical Americana which he is compiling. All of these libraries have considerable resources in the field of early medical imprints of this country. A quick check of the shelves at the Boston Medical Library revealed twelve titles not represented in the check-list, and eight new titles were found in the American Antiquarian Society by scanning the subject catalog from "medical botany" through "medical laws and legislation." Many locations of copies of the early imprints were noted from an annotated Evans' American Bibliography (1639-1800) made available to Mr. Austin at the John Carter Brown Library. It is anticipated that many additional titles within the scope of the check-list will be found in the American Imprints Inventory records at the Library of Congress.

Any library having pre-1821 American medical imprints, or imprints pertinent to the early history of medicine in the United States, is invited to make the fact known to Mr. Austin so that locations of copies can appear in the list, which is scheduled for publication early in 1961.

NLM EXHIBITS AT SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Since July 1956 selected items from the Library's Art Collection have been on display in the Division of Medicine and Public Health of the Smithsonian Institution. The exhibit "The Evolution of Hospitals" described in Hospitals, 1956, 30:40-44 (June 1), still remains on a semi-permanent loan basis in the Gallery of Medical History. Material exhibited during Fiscal Year 1957 included seven Japanese block prints on medical subjects by Yoshiiku (1833-1904); a group of ten reproductions from an NLM exhibit on "Saints and Medicine"; and a set of nine 19th century medical caricatures. The exhibit schedule for Fiscal Year 1958 will include the following quarterly exhibitions: "Vaccination - from Jenner to Salk"; "Nobel Prize Winners in the Medical Sciences"; "The Doctor's Office - Then and Now"; and "Pioneer Women in Modern Medicine."

DUPLICATES TO NEW MEDICAL SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Several months ago the National Library of Medicine determined that the magnitude of its duplicate exchange operation would have to be curtailed; among other reasons for the change, one which figured prominently was the never-ending search for shelf space to which the Library is necessarily addicted.

During May and June, 20,000 pieces from the Library's duplicate journals were dispatched to libraries now being organized to serve newly established medical schools or schools being converted from two- to four-year programs. Institutions assisted in this fashion were the Albert Einstein College of Medicine; West Virginia University; University of Kentucky; University of Missouri; University of Mississippi; Seton Hall College of Medicine. The University of Florida and the University of Miami have benefited from previous distributions of duplicate medical journals.

PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE AIDS THE DENTIST

In collaboration with the National Institute of Dental Research and the Division of Dental Public Health, the National Library of Medicine has been engaged in the development of a traveling panel exhibit featuring the periodical literature of dentistry and the approach to it through the chief indexes and abstract journals in the field. The purpose of this exhibit is two-fold: 1) to develop research potential by increasing the skill with which dental students use the literature, and 2) to assist the dentist in locating literature necessary to keep him abreast of both clinical and diagnostic methods in his field.

The exhibit will be constructed in two sections, one for dental students and the other for dental practitioners; each section will be entitled "Professional Literature Aids the Dentist." The two sections will be displayed separately at major dental schools and dental society meetings throughout the United States.

Use of funds for printing this publication approved by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, March 22, 1957

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